



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/813,166	03/31/2004	Yoshiki Hirano	033897-005	4457
21839	7590	08/23/2005	EXAMINER	
BUCHANAN INGERSOLL PC (INCLUDING BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS) POST OFFICE BOX 1404 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22313-1404				GURZO, PAUL M
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		2881		

DATE MAILED: 08/23/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/813,166	HIRANO ET AL.	
	Examiner Paul Gurzo	Art Unit 2881	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 July 2005.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-6 and 11 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 7-10 and 12 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 31 March 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>8/11/04</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION***Election/Restrictions***

Applicant's election without traverse of claims 7-12 in the reply filed on 7/28/05 is acknowledged. However, claim 11 is dependent on withdrawn claim 1. Therefore, claim 11 is also withdrawn and claims 7-10 and 12 will be examined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 7-10 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the elements. See MPEP § 2172.01. The omitted elements are: there is no claimed language in claim 7 as to how the attachment is inhibited. The specification teaches that electromagnetic waves at a frequency matching the absorption band of H₂O heats the H₂O thereby inhibiting metal ion attachment to the H₂O molecules (page 19). These parts and steps are essential for the apparatus to function. Further, there is no basis in the specification for how the unit can inhibit attachment to specific molecules. It can inhibit attachment to a group of molecules, like H₂O, but it does not selectively inhibit individual molecules, only individual groups.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

- (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiokawa et al. (6,590,205).

Regarding claim 7, 205 teaches an ion attachment mass spectrometry apparatus causing positively charged metal ions to attach to analyte molecules to be measured in an attachment region to generate attached ions and then performing mass spectrometry on said attached ions by a mass spectrometer, comprised of a metal ion emitter (20) for emitting said metal ions to said attachment region, an introduction unit (22) for introducing said analyte molecules into said attachment region, and a mass spectrometer (13) for performing said mass spectrometry on said attached ions (col. 6, line 35 - col. 7, line 50 and Fig. 2). 205 does not explicitly teach a metal ion attachment inhibiting unit for inhibiting attachment of said metal ions to specific molecules in said attachment region. However, Fig. 7 depicts a hole (51a) where the metal ions pass through and attach to the analyte molecules, and a hole (51b) for the ions to pass through as they continue on to the mass spectrometer (13) (col. 9, lines 29-48). Each of the these holes (51a or 51b) will act as a metal ion attachment inhibiting unit because they will retard the flow of the metal ions and therefore prevent at least some of the ions from attaching to the molecules in the region. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to inhibit attachment to achieve improved accuracy of analysis of the sample by the mass spectrometer.

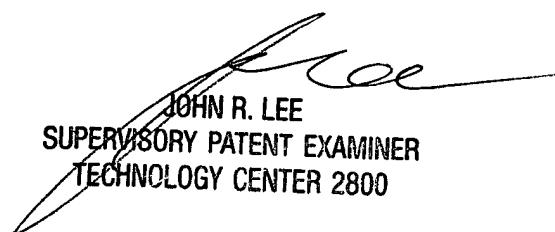
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul Gurzo whose telephone number is (571) 272-2472. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Fri. 7:30 - 6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Lee can be reached at (571) 272-2477. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

PMG


JOHN R. LEE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800